B' cancel

(i) reacting the polymer having at least one functional group, with at least one activating reagent or at least one derivative of an activating reagent in a homogeneous phase.

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 6 and 9 - 15 are pending in the Application. Claims 5, 10, 14 and 15 have been cancelled. Claims 10, 14 and 15 were cancelled, as they were withdrawn by the Examiner in the instant Office Action. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 5. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the foregoing amendments.

The Examiner asserts that Applicants are required under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to elect a single disclosed species from whichever group is elected, even though this requirement is traversed. Applicants hereby elect the derivatized polymer described in Example 1 (pages 43 and 44 of the Specification).

It is understood that should the Examiner find claims that read on the above-mentioned species allowable, then the search and examination of the entire application will proceed according to the procedure set forth in MPEP § 803.02. That is, the search will be extended to non-elected species.

Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications covering the subject matter of the non-elected claims.

Applicants respectfully request examination on the merits of this application. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

Date January 21, 2003

By _____ Reg. No. 48,330

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Marked-up Claims:

1. (Twice Amended) A process for the preparation of a derivative of a polymer having at least one functional group, wherein said at least one functional group is an OH group, an NHR_{11} group, an SH group, an OSO_3H group, an SO_3H group, an OPO_3H_2 group, an OPO_3HR_{11} group, a PO_3H_2 group, a PO_3HR_{11} group, a COOH group or a mixture of two or more of these groups, where R_{11} is in each case selected such that the activating reagent or the derivative of the activating reagent can be reacted in a homogeneous phase with the polymer having at least one functional group, wherein the process comprises:

(i) reacting the polymer having at least one functional group, with at least one activating reagent or at least one derivative of an activating reagent in a homogeneous phase.